THE CHILDREN'S BREAD

J. E. PARK

Class BV4315
Book .P3
Copyright No.

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.

WORKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR

The Parables of Life	$ .50
The Dwarf's Spell	.50
The Keen Joy of Living	.25
The Wonder of His Gracious Words	.50
The Sermon on the Mount	.25
The Man Who Missed Christmas	.25
How I Spent My Million	.50
The Rejuvenation of Father Christmas	.50

THE CHILDREN'S BREAD

THE CHILDREN'S BREAD

BY

J. EDGAR PARK

AUTHOR OF

"THE PARABLES OF LIFE," "THE KEEN JOY OF LIVING," "THE MAN WHO MISSED CHRISTMAS," ETC.

THE PILGRIM PRESS

BOSTON CHICAGO

Copyright 1916
By J. EDGAR PARK

The Author donates the proceeds of this book to the Orphelinat des Armées which is fathering the fatherless Children of France

$0.75

THE PILGRIM PRESS
BOSTON

LC Control Number

tmp96 027747

DEDICATED TO

THE CHILDREN OF WEST NEWTON
THE PREACHER'S INSPIRATION

PREFACE

THE YOUNG MINISTER WAS A bachelor. He used to preach once a month to parents. He told them never to punish their children but to train them by love. He instructed them never to say "Don't" to their children. He quoted Wordsworth's "Ode to Immortality" and upheld the original, natural and ineradicable goodness of the human species. Moreover he was much in earnest and waxed exceeding eloquent.

In process of time he got married. It was noticed after his second child was born that the sermons to parents ceased. But he began to pray for them more.

At the same time he seemed to be growing gradually more orthodox. One Sunday he

quoted the Westminster Confession of Faith with approval. Shortly after the birth of his fourth child he preached upon the wisdom and truth of the old doctrine of total depravity. He had come to see, he said, as he grew older, the everlasting power of many of the old doctrines. They had all been drawn from human experience; he felt sure that the original framers of the Confession were all fathers of large families.

Time passed on and the minister became a grandfather. When his second grandchild was born he began to preach to children and for the first time in all those years the parents began to understand his sermons.

(From the author's *The Parables of Life.*)

CONTENTS

	PAGE
The Best Book in the World	1
"Ask What I Shall Give Thee"	5
Heaven	11
"Be Glad"	15
How Far Can You Reach?	21
"In the End"	25
"He That Hath Ears"	31
The Sun	37
Friends	41
Apples	47
"Twelve Years Old"	53
"But"	59
"His Hands"	65
Joy in Heaven	69
"I Am the Way"	73
"Like a Tree"	77

CONTENTS

	PAGE
"The Wind Bloweth"	81
God	87
Verily I Say Unto You	93
The Magic Ring	97
I Caused the Widow's Heart to Sing for Joy	101
My Word	107
Forty Days	111
The Word He Could Not Say	117

THE BEST BOOK IN THE WORLD

IT IS FULL OF PICTURES — EVERY page has a picture — of birds, beasts, men, and of all kinds of adventures. Some pages are crammed full of pictures. There are more pictures in it than in any other book in the world. And the most curious thing is that not only are all these pictures colored, but they all move, they all are alive and walk about and act and run and play. Still more wonderful — the book is not merely full of pictures: it is full of music, the birds in it really sing, the people talk, the brooks babble over the stones and the wind rustles among the trees. It's the best book in the world. No, it is not the Bible I am talking about now. Everybody is reading

this book; everyone here is reading it. Some have only turned over a few pages and are just at the beginning of it; some have turned over a great number of pages and are quite near the end of it.

What book is it? Can any of you guess? Well, now I can tell you the text, and then you'll see what the book is. The text is Revelation 20:12—THE BOOK OF LIFE.

Now you see what the book is. It is the book of your life. Every day is a page, every thing that happens is a picture, the things you remember are in the pages you have turned over, and see what the picture is you are looking at now.

Who writes this book of your life? God writes part of it and you write part of it. Every morning God turns over a new page and fills in the outlines of the picture that is

to go on that page, the things that are to happen to you on that day. Then He leaves it to you to finish and color the page. Oh! how you spoil it sometimes: don't you? Some pages are ruined with a big blot of temper, or a lie that doesn't look right, or carelessness that spoils the picture, or unkindness that looks so ugly. So many a day all God's nice outlines are spoiled.

But see, you have turned over a new page today. What are you going to write and paint on it? I think there are seven beautiful pages waiting for you this week. What will you write on them? God will put on them beautiful pictures of birds and flowers and love and happiness. When you come here next Sunday will all your seven nice pages be smudged with temper and meanness, and greediness and hate?

No, I know they will not, I know that you will come with pages fair and beautiful, half God's work, half your work — Sunday's page, Monday's page, Tuesday's page, and so on, all beautiful; God's pictures colored by your laughter and love and happiness and help.

ASK WHAT I SHALL GIVE THEE

1 Kings 3: 5

IT IS A WONDERFUL FAIRY TALE. God appeared to Solomon by night and said, "Ask what I shall give thee," and promised to give him whatever he asked for! Think of it! If an angel came to your bed tonight and said he would give you anything you wanted, what would you ask for?

There once was a room and in the room there were three cribs, and there were three children sleeping in the three cribs. One night an angel came into the room. He touched the little girl who was sleeping in the first crib on the shoulder, and she woke up.

Her eyes were all open wide when she saw

the great white angel standing by her bed, and the angel said:

"Ask what I shall give thee! I'll give you anything you want."

So the little girl said, "Oh, I want a big doll, with brown hair and blue eyes and a big hat on, and a box full of all her clothes that you can put on and off her."

And the angel stooped down and kissed the little girl on the cheek. Then she put out her hand, and lo! sitting at the bottom of the crib was the very doll she wanted, with a big hat and with brown hair and blue eyes, and a big doll's trunk beside her full of all her clothes. And the little girl was so excited that she could hardly wait till morning to tell her mother all about it.

But the angel went on to the next crib. There was a little boy sleeping there. The

angel touched him on the shoulder, and he woke up with big, wide-open eyes to see the great figure by his bed. And the angel said:

"Ask what I shall give thee! I'll give you anything you want."

Then the boy said, "Oh! I want a purse of money to do anything I like with."

And the angel stooped and kissed him on the cheek, and then he put out his hand, and lo! at the bottom of his crib there was a purse just stuffed with money so that it was overflowing upon the crib.

Then the angel went on to the third crib, but there was no need to wake the little girl who was there for she was sitting up and looking at the angel with big, wide-open eyes. So the angel stooped down and kissed her on the cheek and said to her:

"Ask what I shall give thee! I'll give you anything you want."

Then the little girl said, "Oh! I've been watching you and I'd like nothing better in the world than to be able to go about the way you are, giving people everything they want, and to look as happy and as beautiful as you."

Then the angel stooped and kissed her on the cheek, and said, "Look!" Then the angel put out his hand so — and said again, "Look!" And lo! in the angel's hand there was the most beautiful golden wand, with a glittering jewel at the end. And the angel said, "This is the invisible wand that is able to give everyone what they want; see, I am giving it to you!" and the angel laid it down in the crib beside the little girl.

Now the rest of the story is a little sad, because the doll said, "Mama, Mama," for

the first few days, and then somehow that part of her got broken, and then in a few weeks she was left out in the grass one night and all her clothes were spoiled by the rain, and one day after that her hair came off, and — well, the end of it all was that one Monday morning a few months afterwards, when the ashman came round to that house, he found on the top of the barrel he was to take away all that was left of that poor dolly, and the little girl inside was crying for another doll, and there was no angel to give it to her.

And the little boy when he got up, went right down town and spent all his money on candy. He never had been able to get as much as he wanted before; so he ate it all up and made himself so sick that they had to come for him from the hospital, so of course that was the end of that.

But the little girl who had the wand! Wherever she went she touched people with the invisible wand and it gave them all they desired. Where people were quarrelling, when the little girl came into the room and touched them, they began to laugh at their own foolishness and they couldn't help it, and when people were poor and sick it made them happy and better. For the name of the wand was LOVE. And wherever the little girl went, she was the happiest and most liked person around, because she liked people. And the wand never wore out. Even when she was an old lady, years after the doll was buried miles deep in the dump, and the money spent and lost, she still had the wand; and everyone liked her and she liked everyone because of the wand called LOVE that nobody sees.

HEAVEN

Genesis 28 : 17

THERE WAS ONCE A LITTLE girl who asked her mother what heaven was like. Her mother told her that heaven was full of flowers and sunshine and singing birds, and that in heaven everyone loved everyone else.

The little girl looked around the room in which they were sitting. She looked first at the vase that was in the center of the table, and then she looked at the cage that was hanging in all the brightness of the window, and then she looked up into her mother's face and said:

"Mother, I think there is a lot of heaven right in this room!"

That, you know, is the fun of being a Chris-

tian, it is seeing how much heaven you can bring into any room or see in it.

I am going to make a prophecy about something that is going to happen this week. It is going to happen in one of the houses in this town, on one of the days of this week. I see some older person come downstairs slowly — I cannot see very distinctly whether it is a grandfather or a grandmother, or whether it is a father or mother or aunt, or who it is; but it is some older person that has just come downstairs slowly, and is sitting down in a chair.

Suddenly this person says, "Oh! There! I've gone and forgotten my glasses or my book (I can't just hear what it is), upstairs."

Then I see this older person looking around. At first she thinks she will ask one of the children to go up and get it for her. But

she knows that the child will say with an awful whine:

"Oh! I was just settling down to read this, and there! I can't go up again!"

So the older person is just starting to rise slowly to drag her way upstairs again, when I hear a voice, "I'll go, Aunty, or Grandmother" (or whoever it is), and then I see a little piece of heaven coming into that room and the old grandmother thinks, "The children are so good to me."

And when she wakes up next day in the morning the first thing she remembers is that something nice happened the day before. "What was it? Oh! yes, the children were so kind to me." For, you see, a little bit of heaven had come into the house.

And what is the name of the boy or girl who is going to bring that little bit of heaven

into that home? I do not know, I cannot see it very clearly, but I think it is *your* name. Won't you try to make it your name?

I went to see a mother once whose little Marjorie had gone away to the better land. Some one said:

"Well, I suppose Marjorie is in heaven now!"

And the mother said, "Of course she is; wherever Marjorie was, was always heaven!"

Wouldn't you like somebody to say that about you? "Wherever —— (naming your name) was, was always heaven!"

BE GLAD

Isaiah 65 : 18

IS NOT THAT A BEAUTIFUL TEXT — I wish you would all underline it in your own Bibles — "BE GLAD." You remember how Pollyanna's father liked all these rejoicing texts: "Rejoice greatly!" and "Shout for joy!" and all such texts, and he counted them and found there were eight hundred of them. Suppose you try this afternoon to count them up in your Bible. See how many times the Bible tells you to be happy!

It is easy enough to tell people to be happy, but how can you keep from getting into what we call the "dumps" once in a while? Well, I want you to notice, when you are going that way, what is the first part of

you that goes wrong. Think! It is your face, isn't it? Yes, that is it, your face begins to go wrong first — the corners of your mouth begin to turn down, your eyes to water, your lower jaw to go out into the shape of a whine, and you are all ready to be unhappy.

So, you see, if you want to obey the text the first thing necessary is to look after your face. Don't let it run away with you! I remember once in the big custom house on the dock in New York looking for a lost trunk. You know when a big steamer comes in there are thousands of trunks, and they put them in a tremendous shed which has big letters painted all down its sides, and your trunk is supposed to be under the first letter of your name. Mine was lost! It wasn't in its right place. I had looked all down the shed twice. Had it been left behind? I was going around show-

ing by my face how unhappy I was about it. I met a commercial traveler who was looking for his, too. He looked at my face and said:

"Whistle! It will make you feel a lot better and you'll find it just as soon!"

I began to whistle, my unhappy face changed, I felt better and in a moment I saw a big J.E.P. on a trunk and found it was mine. Remember, the first thing when you feel yourself getting unhappy is to look after your face. Don't let it get fixed; whistle or laugh and perhaps the unhappy mood will pass.

But it is not only how you look; it is also how you feel that helps you to obey this text.

It is not what you have got that makes you happy, it is how you feel about it. I remember once seeing a picture of a little boy looking through some great gilt iron railings and weeping; he had one of the most unhappy

faces I ever saw. He was the son and heir of one of the richest men in London and was looking out from his father's London estate. Two footmen were standing behind him with hands full of toys, and a nursemaid was on her knees with candy and comforts, but he was weeping as if his heart would break. Why? Because two little ragamuffins on the dirty street outside had got an old soap box and fixed some spools to it and were dragging each other through the mud in it. And my Lord Parklane wanted to get out and play with them. Remember, it is not what you have that makes you happy. It is the way you feel about it.

The unhappiest face I know of in the world is the face of the hen who has just found a dainty scrap in the yard and picks it up and runs off with it to find a place where she can

eat it, all by herself. She is afraid some other hen has seen it; she runs away, hearing them running after her; she is so unhappy lest she will have to share it with one of the others.

But the happiest face in the world is the face of the mother bird who has found a fat worm and is flying home to give it to her little ones.

You see then how to be happy — it lies in giving, not in getting.

If you take care of your face, especially of the corners of your mouth, and if you share every good thing you have, your feelings may be left to take care of themselves. You will be happy most of the time.

HOW FAR CAN YOU REACH?

HOW FAR CAN YOU REACH? *With your hands?* Only a few feet. See! I remember the first time I was able to reach up to the parlor-door handle, and how big and shiny and smooth it seemed, and how my little hands slipped around it when I tried to turn it. And even the longest-armed of us — how small a distance we can reach!

With your voice? If you have ever tried shouting to somebody away down in a field to come in for dinner, you know how short a distance your voice will reach. Of course the telephone helps in this way. I remember one stormy winter night I was staying in a little hotel, twenty miles from a railroad, in the

center of the Adirondack mountains. There were only lumbermen there. But the stage came up to the door very late, for there had been a good deal of shovelling to do to get through, and there was a man in it who got off and immediately went to the telephone. He called up a place in Canada and in a moment he was talking with his own home. I remember how homesick it made the rest of us feel as we heard him speak with each of his children in turn. Even the baby seemed to be held up to the telephone that he might speak to "papa" away off in the States.

But even with the telephone, how short a distance you can reach with your voice! But there is a way you can reach to the end of the earth and to the end of the world.

With your kindness? There once was a mean guide in the Adirondacks who, in order

to spite some tourists, took some pickerel and put them into the lake. Now the pickerel have sharp teeth and they drive all the nice trout out of the water. So all over that district now there are no trout — only the fierce pickerel. The guide died years ago but still his meanness reaches thousands of people every year, who but for him would have their streams and lakes full of delicious trout.

Every mean deed you do reaches away out and touches more people than you can touch with your hands, or reach with your voice. But it is the same with every kind deed. It, too, will reach away over the world and away down the centuries, and make people you never heard of glad and happy.

"The common deeds of the common day
Are ringing bells in the far away."

IN THE END

Jeremiah 5 : 31

SUPPOSING I HAD HERE A MAGIC mirror and supposing each of you children could come up here and look in it, and see in it what you will be like when you are old ladies and old gentlemen. Would it not be fun?

See! a white-haired old lady, living in a place all strange to you, in a funny house all different from anything you ever saw. And look! At the edge of the mirror you can see the neighbors who have come in to see her on her eightieth birthday. Listen to what they are saying! Do you hear? They are saying that she is the kindest person they have ever known, that she has helped everyone every way she could, never grumbled about

herself, and that everyone who ever knew her loved her. Who is the old lady? It is you. That is what you are going to be like when you are eighty.

Look again, you boys, into the magic mirror. Here is a little, wizened-up old man walking about the streets of the town, and do you hear what everyone is saying about him? "Oh! if there is a dollar in it for him he'll help you, and if there isn't he won't." Even his wife and daughter have learned at meal times to leave the best of everything for him; otherwise there would be trouble. Who is the old man? I don't know, do you? I hope it isn't I. Don't you?

"But there is not any magic mirror," you say. Oh, yes there is! There is a magic mirror which will tell pretty well just what you will be when you are eighty. What you are

now, in your heart, is pretty much what you are going to be, if you don't watch out.

When I was at high school I heard a boy sitting next me say, "I wish Jerry would stay at home and not come."

"Why?" I said.

"Oh," he answered, "he's selfish. Ask him to let you take his penknife and see if he isn't."

I walked up to him and asked him for the loan of his penknife to sharpen my pencil, and he growled:

"No, I've just got it sharpened, and I don't want it blunted." And he turned aside, took out his knife and began whittling a stick with it.

I make the guess that wherever that man is today his wife and children and neighbors know that he is selfish and know better than to ask any favor of him. The magic mirror

in which we can see our future is ourselves. Your parents, your brothers and sisters, your teachers can make a pretty good guess already what kind of an old man or woman you will be. I confess, I like to prove other people wrong about me sometimes. I like to look into my own magic mirror myself and change things in time so as to make them come out better in the end.

Supposing we all do it now. The worst sin in the world is to be mean. Now let each of us ask ourselves: "Am I ever mean? Do I ever bother my mother when she's tired? Do I ever make my teacher unhappy by not acting 'square' towards her and doing the best I can? Do I ever tell lies to get out of hard places easily? Did I ever allow someone else to get the blame for something I had done?"

Well, if we are mean now we will be horrible when we are eighty. Let us all ask God to help us to change ourselves for the better now, so that when we are eighty, people will have good and not bad to say of us and to think about us.

You know, while we are young, people say about us, "How like your father or mother you look!" But when we get old we begin to look like ourselves. If you and I are unkind and mean in our minds now it will all come out upon our faces soon. But every kind thought you think before you are twenty comes out in your brow, or your smile, or your clear, kind eye long before you are seventy. Everything comes out "in the end."

HE THAT HATH EARS

Mark 4 : 7

LAST NIGHT THE GREAT COLlege Hall at Wellesley College burned down and there were fire alarms all night in all the cities around here, and this morning lots of people got up and said, when they saw the news in the paper, "Well, it is funny I didn't hear the alarm!" Do you know why they didn't hear the alarm? Well, because they were asleep.

Now it is a good thing to be asleep when you are asleep, but in Christ's time there were lots of people who were asleep when they were awake. And so there are now! So Jesus tried to impress upon people who were awake that those who had ears should hear with them. It is a good thing to train all your

senses to be sharp. Go out into the woods some day and find out if you can hear there as much as an Indian could: How far off can you hear a footstep on dried leaves? How many kinds of song birds can you hear? — Sit down and count. Have you ever noticed your dog pricking up his ears when everything seemed to you to be silent? That is because he hears something you do not. Do not be beaten by a dog. Practise using your ears; no matter what you become, it is going to be useful to you to have sharp hearing. The first reason then why people who have ears often do not hear is that they are asleep when they are awake, and are not listening.

The second reason is that some people seem to have ears that run right through. There seems to be nothing in the head to stop the sound; so it goes in by one ear and right out

by the other. You have heard your mother say to somebody, "Now don't touch that stove!" And in a moment you have heard somebody scream, who has been burned. "You can go out if you promise not to get into the mud," I heard a mother say to her child, and in a few minutes the mother looked out of the window and saw the child covered with mud. What she had told her had gone in at one ear and out at the other. A child was asked lately what the meaning of the word "obey" is, and she said, "To obey is to 'member, and 'member, and 'member till you do it."

The third reason why some people do not use their ears is because they can close them just as we can close our eyes, or our mouth. There is not a flap or anything that they close down over their ears, but all the same they

can close them just as well as if they had a cover for them. I've heard a mother calling a child from the door, and I have seen the child busy playing shop 'round the corner, but the child never moved; and at last the mother had to come right out and find her. Why? Because the child had closed her ears; she didn't want to hear.

A mother once played her children a trick. She went into the room where they were all playing and said, "I want someone to go upstairs for me to get a book." No one heard it; all the children went on playing. Then she said in the same tone of voice, "Would any of you children like some candy?" They all heard that.

Don't be lazy and go about life half asleep, unable to hear anything. Don't be so careless that everything you hear goes right through

your head and has to be repeated again. Don't be so selfish that you can pretend not to hear the things you do not want to take the trouble of doing.

Above all, listen to a little voice in your own heart that says, "You ought to do that!" "You ought not to do that!" "Mama told you not to do it!" That is what we call conscience; it is the voice of God in your heart. Be sure you listen to that!

THE SUN

Ecclesiastes 11 : 7

IN MANY OLD PICTURES WHICH I have seen, the Sun is represented as smiling. He is a fat-faced old gentleman with a broad smile upon his face, regarding the world with the greatest satisfaction. And in all languages the word they use for fields upon which the Sun is shining is the word "smiling" — they say "smiling fields."

Why is it, do you think, that the Sun is always thought of as happy and smiling? I think it is because he is the only thing in the universe that always gives and never gets. He is always giving light and warmth and cheer; so he is always happy, especially as he never seems to get anything in return. The

Moon looks glum because she gets all her light from the Sun and grudges the little she has to give back again to us. But the Sun is so glad to give that sometimes, in August, he actually gives us more than we need.

There is a big boys' school in New England which has a seal which always seems to me very beautiful. On it you see flowers springing, and bees around the hive enjoying the flowers, and the big happy Sun shining; indeed they all look so happy on the seal — the flowers and the bees and the Sun. And what do you think the motto of the school is that is written below on this seal? It is two Latin words, "*Non Sibi*," which mean "Not for Themselves." That is why they are all so happy — because they are living "not for themselves." The flowers are giving color and fragrance to everyone that passes, the

bees are gathering honey for their little ones (and perhaps for some slices of your bread), the Sun is shining for the flowers and the bees and everybody, and they are all happy because it is "not for themselves."

There once was a good man called Saint Francis who loved all things, and used to call the sun "My brother, the Sun!" That is a good way to feel about him — as our big brother who teaches us every day that the only way to be happy is to give happiness to others.

FRIENDS

John 15 : 14

I SUPPOSE IF YOU GATHERED IN one room all the wisest and best people who had ever lived, and asked them what they thought the best thing in life is, I suppose they would give a unanimous vote that the best thing in the world is friends.

A friend is someone you like. It is curious how everyone likes some things more than others. In the same home you may have two children born the same day, and one may like sweet things and the other sour. One cries for candy, and the other for pickles. Why? I do not suppose that anyone is wise enough to answer that question. It is still stranger as you grow older. You will find some people whom you will like, the very first time

you see them, better than you like most other people. The very first day I went to school another little boy came up and sat down beside me in the class, and we spoke to one another a little, and although we hardly ever have been nearer each other than 3,000 miles since our school days in that old school, we have been friends ever since and hardly a week passes without letters reaching each of us, with foreign stamps upon them, from the other. Why is it that we can all find in the world people like that whom we like better than we like most other people? One great writer thinks it is because we have been friends before. Up in heaven where the babies wait to be born, he thinks we have met before and arranged to try to come down to the earth at the same time. Whether this is so or not, I do not know. But I do think

it is one of the strangest things in life how you meet people whom you seem to have known and liked for a lifetime somewhere.

But a friend is not only a person you like, but also a person to whom you are loyal. Some weeks ago, I overheard one girl say to another, "You know she thinks I'm her friend!" and then she told that girl some ridiculous thing about the other and they both giggled and laughed at it. Now that is one of the worst sins there is — disloyalty — to pretend to be a person's friend and then go and retail confidences like that. To be a friend you must be loyal to your friend no matter what it costs you.

I once saw a picture called by this title, "When did you last see your father?" It was about the times when the Puritans were fighting the Cavaliers in England. Some

Puritans had taken the home of one of the Cavaliers in order that they might kill the father of the house. The picture shows the parlor of the house. The stern, cruel soldiers have searched everywhere for the father and have not found him. Now they have got the little boy of the house upon a footstool, and these cruel men with clenched fists are asking him, "When did you last see your father?" You can see what will happen if he refuses to answer. They will twist his arms till the bones crack, they will use the thumb-screw till the blood flows. But look at the little boy standing before them with his mouth tightly closed! Is he going to tell? No! His father is his friend. He is going to be loyal to him, even if he has to die for it at the hands of these cruel men.

Now if you dare to like anyone in life, you must take the risk of being loyal to him, even if it means not telling many things you know the others would love to know, even if it means taking ridicule for your friend's sake, even if it means in some burning boat giving up your place in the lifeboat to your unconscious friend. Are you worthy to be a friend of anyone, do you think? Have you the stuff of loyalty in you?

If you have, you have a chance of having the best thing in life, a friend to whom perhaps in long after years, when you both are white-headed, you will be saying, "Do you remember years ago those children's sermons we used to hear? There was one about friendship — I remember as if it were yesterday — and see how many years we have been friends!" And then you will count

up all the scores of years of your happy friendship together.

I want you all to be sure of one great Friend, and that is God, for if you are a friend of His, you will be a better friend to all your other friends. Every morning and evening remember to kneel down and talk with that great, good, unseen Friend of yours, and then be loyal to Him all the time.

APPLES

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" — Proverbs 25 : 11

HAVE YOU EVER NOTICED HOW gnarled the branches of the apple-tree are? If you have ever had to split apple-wood you know how hard it is to split, because it is all twists and turns. And when you look at an apple-tree against the sky, you see that its arms are all stretched out as if protesting against some age-long wrong. Many of them seem as if they were trying to get down upon their knees and stretch forth their scraggy arms beseeching for justice. I sometimes think the reason is because everybody blames them for all the trouble that has come into the world, and says

that it was an apple that Eve gave to Adam, and that it is a piece of the apple that has stuck as Adam's apple in every man's throat, until the present day.

Now of course this is all unjust, because the Bible never says it was an apple at all, and I do not blame the apple-tree for being annoyed about it. In fact, in the Bible and all through the books of the East the apple is one of the most dearly-loved fruits.

It is rather curious to know why they like the apple in the East. If you or I should be so fortunate as to get an apple, the first thing we would think of would be to eat it. But in the East, I have been told by travellers, they love the apple for its delicious perfume. When visiting in a house in the East sometimes they hand you an apple just to hold in your hand and enjoy its fragrance. The

first thing a patient asks a doctor when he is getting better often is, "May I have an apple, just to smell?" So in the Song of Solomon in the Bible the highest praise of someone who was clean and sweet was "Thy breath is like apples."

Now our text probably means this, "A word fitly spoken is like golden apples in filigree silver baskets." That is probably what the word "pictures" meant — baskets of delicate silver lacework.

Our author could think of nothing more pretty in its harmony of color than yellow-gold apples in silver baskets of delicate workmanship. For him they were the right thing in the right place. There was their sweet smell, there was their beautiful color, and there was the contrast between the gold of the apple and the silver of the basket. He liked

all these things. He said it was as beautiful as the power to say the right thing at the right time.

Can you say the right thing at the right time? The people of other nations are better at it than we are. In Ireland an old beggar woman asked a gentleman to give her something to buy her some food. He refused and looked annoyed, at which the old lady said, "Child of Grace, it's not for the sake of a penny you and me'd fall out!"

In Scotland a little girl was asked to show a visitor out, and as she opened the door she said, "An' when you're goin', it's aye comin' I wish you were!"

In this country any little courteous words we do say are said so shortly and gruffly that it seems as if they didn't mean anything. We say "Welcome," when we are thanked and

we say "Forget it!" when people speak of something we have done for them, but it sometimes sounds just a form of words with no heart in it. It is fine to be able to say the right word, the comforting word, the humorous word in an awkward situation that will immediately relieve the tension. How can we all learn to do so? Not by practising fine words — no — but by trying always to *think kindly*. If only in your heart you are "thinking kindly" of other people, then the words of your mouth will be "like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

TWELVE YEARS OLD

Luke 2 : 42

THE PARENTS OF JESUS USED to go off on an excursion to Jerusalem every year. I suppose they left the little boy Jesus alone at home with some relative or in the house of some neighbor. I can imagine how wistful the little boy would look as he hung around the house seeing things being packed and preparations being made for this interesting journey. At last would come the day when they would depart, the little pony or mule ready at the door, Joseph and Mary prepared for the long journey. I can imagine how the little boy Jesus would stand waving his hand in "good-bye" to the little company as they wended their way out of the village and disappeared

behind the hill. I can imagine how Jesus' eyes would be full of lonely tears as he saw his mother turn round for the last time at the bend in the road and look back to see her little son still standing waving his hand in the place where she had left him.

Now there came a year and Jesus saw his parents prepare as usual for their pilgrimage. Although he had seen them go so often, yet, I imagine, he had never got used to it, and the same lonely, wistful feeling always came over him as he saw the preparations for their departure. Day passed after day, and now all things were almost ready for the start, when on the morning of that very day, he heard Joseph's voice calling "Jesus! Jesus!" and, running up, he heard the wonderful news that he was going to Jerusalem, too. Think how happy he would be. No longer

to be left at home! He was twelve years old and a man now, who could go with his parents to the great feast at Jerusalem. What a happy party started out that year from the village! Jesus was eager to see the wide world, and we can imagine how proud Mary was of her son, now grown to be a man, for the people then all thought that when a boy was twelve, he ceased to be little and became big, for then he ceased wasting his time playing all the day and began to learn a trade. At twelve years old the boy became a man.

Now what is the difference between a boy and a man? I asked a small boy of my acquaintance this question, and this was his answer: "When you hit a boy, he cries; when you hit a man, he doesn't." Now that is a pretty good way of putting it. A man doesn't whine and cry about every little thing

that happens that doesn't suit him. In Japan when a boy cries his mother laughs at him, and says, "What will you do when your arm is torn off in battle?" And in some places they send their boys out in the dark squares at night just to make them brave in the dark, fearing nothing.

"What do you do when the brambles tear your feet?" said a man to a barefooted boy in the country once. "Doesn't it hurt you? What do you do?"

"Ah," was the answer, "I just let it hurt!" That boy was a man.

Another sign of having grown from being a boy and having become a man is that one can behave well in church and meetings when parents and teachers are not there to keep order. The baby boy cannot do this. You have noticed how he wriggles and whispers,

and tells jokes to his neighbors and is not able to listen or sit still. He is still in the basinette stage, when you have to be strapped in to be kept still. But you will all, also, have noticed how about twelve years of age, or thereabouts, the baby turns into a man who behaves in church — listens, sings, prays.

In many tribes of men twelve is the age when the boy takes upon him his rights and duties as a member of the church of his people. It was so in the case of Jesus. He went up to Jerusalem to worship there as a member of his father's church. So for us it is the time when we should think of taking our stand in life for Jesus and coming out before the world on his side. When Jesus was twelve he went up to make his confession in Jerusalem. Why not you? Why not come out before the world then and say, "I am a Christian!"

BUT

Jonah 1 : 3

THE BIBLE TELLS US AN INteresting story about a man called Jonah. Jonah was a man who could not do what he was told. God told him to go to Nineveh, *but* Jonah went to Tarshish, and the result was that he got into trouble. Why? Because he had disobeyed.

It is curious how few people have the power to do what they are told to do. There are all kinds of prize competitions in the newspapers these days, and printed plainly are the conditions which you must obey — you must write on one side of the paper only, you must not write your name on the sheet, and so on. Do you know that in any large competition there are hundreds of people disqualified

simply because they cannot obey? They send in their papers written on both sides or disobey the rules in some other way. In most elections hundreds of votes are thrown out for the same reason; in one city in Massachusetts a few days ago, where some of the best-educated Americans live, a whole election came out wrong because nearly everybody had voted for five people when they were plainly told on the ballot to vote for only four.

You have noticed that it is just the same in your home. Your mother says, as you run downstairs, "Please do not slam the door when you go out!" Now listen! Ah! you know what happens without listening.

The thing that is so extraordinary is that some boys and girls actually seem to think that they are particularly bright because they are not able to obey. In school, for instance,

the boy who is not man enough to do what he is told to do sometimes grins and swaggers as if he were doing something brave and bold. He is simply breaking the rules of the game, that is all. Life is just like baseball — there are certain rules and if you break the rules you spoil the game, that is all. I once saw 30,000 people all hissing one man. It was at a football game in Edinburgh. He had broken the rules when he thought nobody saw him. But they did see him, and he had to walk off the field hissed by the thousands who had seen him. Now at school one of the rules is that you obey. The child that has not backbone enough to do so should be ashamed of himself.

It is that "but" which came in when Jonah was told to do things that spoils so many people's lives. You are told to do a thing,

"but" you do not want to do it, or you forget to do it, or you did not understand, or somebody else was not going to do it — we can all make excuses in plenty. The heart of the matter is we were not strong enough to obey.

All this practice of obeying others is practice towards the great art of life — the power of being able to obey yourself. Can you obey yourself? Do you ever say to yourself, "Now I won't do that again," and then find yourself in a few hours doing it again? Have you ever made a good resolution and then not kept it? Have you ever said, "Now this will be absolutely my last piece of candy," and then taken two or three more afterward? Then you are not able even to obey yourself, and you cannot do very much in life till you get that power.

A few days ago a big auto truck was passing

down Washington Street, when something suddenly went wrong with its steering-gear, and it went wabbling all over the place, landing at last inside a big store window, all smashed up itself, and having injured many people and much property. That is like a life that has not gained the power to obey itself; it is a derelict, injuring others and itself.

Will you try this week to get that "but" out of your life, which spoils it so? Will you try to obey parents and teachers immediately so that you may get the will-practice of being able some day, when it is perhaps a matter of life and death, to obey yourself?

HIS HANDS

Luke 24 : 40

SOME PEOPLE THINK THEY CAN tell a great deal about your life from your hands. I think all they can do is to guess at the kind of person you have been, and the kind of things you have been doing. I used to teach a class of big working men to write. Now it was easy to tell from the way a man tried to hold a pen that he had never had one in his hands before. They all held their pens as if they were crowbars. You could tell pretty well as you looked over the hands writing upon the papers what the men's trades were, just as you can tell the hand of a seamstress by the mark made by the thread which she breaks over her finger.

In one of the big packing houses in Chicago, I am told, they tell what kind of a character you have been by your hand. When a boy comes to ask for a job, they ask him some questions, and then say, "Show me your hand!" and if the tips of the fingers are yellow, the boy misses his chance. They do not want any cigarette smokers there.

So you could have told what kind of life our Lord had lived by his hands had He shown them to you. They were not grasping, greedy hands, they were rather such hands as had been placed many a night upon the brow of the fevered and the sick — cool and tender. They were hands of compassion, filled with sympathetic touch. A great surgeon once said, "A real surgeon must have eyes on the ends of his fingers." So Jesus had healing love and sympathy in his hands. When

he laid them on the weary brow they gave health and strength.

Jesus' hands as he showed them were pierced by cruel wounds, which told of pain and suffering borne for us — such honorable wounds as many of you have seen borne by some of the veterans of our Civil War. The scars on Jesus' hands are a sign of the love he bears to us all.

"We may not know, we cannot tell
What pains he had to bear,
But we believe it was for us
He hung and suffered there."

When we see him at last, even if we have not courage to look up at his blessed face, we shall know him by his hands.

JOY IN HEAVEN

Luke 15 : 7

THE CHOIRS OF HEAVEN HAD surpassed themselves. The wondrous song was over, and the angels were conscious of the presence of our Lord passing among them. "Never in my earthly days," said one, "did I dream of such exquisite music. Surely this is the grandest in the universe."

Our Lord, passing by, turned unto him and said: "Dost thou think so? Follow me!"

Descending to earth, he found himself walking in a forest path by the side of the Lord. The sunset glowed among the trees. He was about to speak when our Lord stood still and raising his hand said, "Listen!" All around the woods were filled with the evening thanks-

giving songs of the birds ere they went to sleep. Darkness came slowly as they stood listening, till at length the last song ceased and all was quiet again. Then the angel said: "It is true, O Lord. This song is even more glorious."

But they were moving on now towards a light that shone through the darkness of the trees, and soon were standing outside a wood-cutter's hut. Inside a mother was putting her little child to bed. They were singing together their evening prayer to the tune "St. Sylvester":

"Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me;
Bless thy little lamb tonight;
Through the darkness be thou near me;
Watch my sleep till morning light."

When the song was over the angel whispered, "The sweetest music!" but as the mother opened wide the window and extinguished the

light, leaving her little child in slumber, our Lord entered in; and all night long Jesus and the angel stood, the one at the head and the other at the foot of the little bed.

With the first ray of morning our Lord bent down and kissed the child, smiling in its sleep, then signing to the angel to follow, went forth to a city far off where in a bare room a young man had been kneeling all night by the side of his bed. His prayer could be heard now mingled with sobs, "Father I have sinned against heaven and before thee, . . . I will arise and go to my father!"

Then Jesus laid his hand on the young man's head and said, looking at the angel: "This is the most glorious music. Go upward and tell the choirs of heaven to sing."

Then the angel departed, leaving Jesus and the young man alone.

I AM THE WAY

John 14 : 6

THE PARTS OF SPEECH ONCE met together to discuss which was the greatest. The first personal pronoun was appointed judge. The nouns, sitting in their thrones — solid, substantial, vast — asserted: "We are the only things; everything else is mere idea; we are the only reality; we are the greatest."

The adjectives laughed at this and cried in scorn: "Nay, what are the nouns without us? A noun without shape or color or size is ridiculous; we give quality to reality; we are the greatest."

At which the verbs rushed in, in great haste, followed by their attendants, shouting as they ran around: "We do things. Nouns are

dead. The great thing in life is to act. Therefore we are the greatest." Their little fairy attendants, who guided all their actions, and kept the strenuous, undisciplined verbs from all kinds of confusion and violence, merely smiled at this and said nothing, for the interjections were asserting that they were the only parts of speech that could talk, and the prepositions and conjunctions (in uniform like little messenger boys) were chattering away to the effect that they were essential to all business arrangements and therefore were the greatest.

After waiting for the confusion to subside, the first personal pronoun said: "The greatest thing in life is not to have things, nor even to have good things. It is not to do things, much less to talk or diplomatically to arrange things. The thing of most importance in

life is *the way* you do things. I therefore call upon the little attendants I see with the verbs — the adverbs — to receive the prize. God must be served by adverbs."

Then the adverbs came up to be crowned as the most important parts of speech. The rest of the company at first was inclined to be angry, but could not remain so long, for the adverbs came and took the prize in such a pleasant way, and acted so nicely about it afterwards.

LIKE A TREE

Psalms 1 : 3

THE BIBLE IS FULL OF TREES. It begins with the Tree of Life in Genesis and it ends with the Tree of Life in Revelation. When the Bible wishes to express great joy and jubilation, it speaks of the way the trees wave their branches in a high wind, and says, "All the trees of the field shall clap their hands." Have you ever seen the trees of the field clapping their hands for the joy of the wind like that? When the Bible wishes to express something majestic and tall and strong, it says it is like the cedars of Lebanon, which were great trees whose roots were coiled around the eternal rocks and whose heads were high up amid the storms of heaven. When the Bible wishes to make you

feel God's care, it points to the stork's nest in the fir tree, or the shade of the fig tree leaves beside your home. It was among the trees of Eden that Adam and Eve first lost touch with God, and it was among the trees of Gethsemane that Jesus, in suffering for sin, brought the whole human race back to God again. The Bible story is full of trees.

One thing was a continual astonishment to the people of the Old Testament, and that was the way in which a tree planted beside a river could keep green all through the fiercest heat. They thought that was a good picture of what we should call a Christian. Just as a tree could keep fresh and green and beautiful in the midst of parching hot weather, so the Christian ought to be able to keep sweet and courteous and pure in the midst of irritation, interruption and temptation.

You know how there are some days when nothing seems to happen just right, when everything everybody does seems out of tune and in poor taste — when, as our parents tell us, we seem to have got out of the wrong side of our beds. This is especially true in the morning. It is generally harder to be a Christian at breakfast than at any other time. How few of us are like the late Principal Rainy, whose little granddaughter said, "Grandpapa must go to heaven every night, because he is always so happy in the morning!"

But the tree in the fierce heat of the sun is calm and green and beautiful. Why? Because its roots are deep down beside the streams of waters in the cool earth. No matter how dusty and hot the air is it cannot make it fade away or shrivel up.

That is the best picture of one whose heart

is filled with kind and beautiful thoughts, whose life is in touch with the life of Jesus.

Every morning before you dare to begin the day, get into touch with Jesus, get the roots of your life deep down towards the springs of living waters. Come down to breakfast with the verse of some great text you have read in your Bible singing in your soul, having spent a few moments in quietness while you knelt by your bed and remembered all you were bound to be for Jesus' sake that day.

THE WIND BLOWETH

John 3 : 8

GOD'S PRESENCE IN THE WORLD is like the wind. God is everywhere, yet everywhere invisible. The presence of God can be felt everywhere in the world, the voice of God can be heard in your heart, but "no man hath seen God at any time." You remember what Robert Louis Stevenson says about the wind: —

I saw the different things you did,
But always you yourself you hid,
I felt you push, I heard you call,
I could not see yourself at all —
O Wind, a-blowing all day long,
O Wind, that sings so loud a song!

So Jesus in the Gospel of St. John says that God is in the world like this mysterious wind,

working and living everywhere, but nowhere seen.

But the presence of God in the world is also like the wind because it is health-giving, everywhere removing pestilence, disease and death. The wind drives the dead leaves away, and in all close and unhealthy parts of the city it blows with new life and strength.

These are the two things I want you to remember about God. First, He is an invisible Spirit who is everywhere like the wind. And second, He is the great purifying Spirit of cleanness and grace. Whenever the spirit of God comes into your heart, then all mean and unkind and impure thoughts and desires are blown away. It matters not where you are, God is always there and you can pray to Him. When you feel bad thoughts and angry desires in your heart, begin to

think of some of the great prayers of the Bible and offer them up in your mind — prayers like these: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me!" "Cleanse me from my sin!" "Come, Lord Jesus! Let me not be overcome of evil but overcome evil with good!"

When you have with earnestness and sincerity offered up such prayers as these, then you will know what is meant by saying that the spirit of God is like the cleansing wind, for when you look back on what happened you will find that somehow your train of thought was turned from the morbid and anxious line, that new thoughts of cheer and brightness sprang out in your mind, and that you were saved from sin.

Try it! The next time you are tempted to think unkind or wayward thoughts, stop,

offer up earnestly some such prayer as these and think it over word by word as you pray it. In an hour, when you look back, you will find that something must have happened, for you were somehow diverted from the evil line of thinking and given happy thoughts.

Just as the warm spring wind blows over the frozen land, bringing back the song of birds and buds and summer again, so the spirit of God is ever ready to fill your life with beauty and song and gladness if you only will open the door of your heart to the spirit as it blows from God's heaven all around the closed windows of our hearts.

God's spirit is full of happy thoughts that want someone to think them. Won't you open the door of your mind at least once a day and let Him suggest them to you?

One day after a long winter the first warm

morning came. A little girl opened wide the window of her room that morning, and as she heard the song of returning birds and saw the glistening buds and felt the new warmth in the air, she pushed back the draperies around her window and stretching out both her hands to the wind said, "Come in, Spring!"

Won't you open the window of your heart at least once every day this week, and say, "Come into my heart, winds of God! Spirit of Jesus, come into my life!"

GOD

Romans 8 : 39

A MAN WHO WAS IN TROUBLE once said, "Oh, I wish God would only do something! God never does anything. We cannot see Him or touch Him or hear Him. Why doesn't He do something once in a while?"

Suppose we try the experiment now and see if there really is a God. Do you think we can feel God, or hear God, or see God? Let us try just now.

First you must put your hand on your left side — there, you see. Now be quite still for a moment. What do you feel? You feel — do you not? — a regular insistent tapping and throbbing which goes on all the time. Who does that? Do you? Certainly you

do not do it, because it goes on regularly without missing a beat all the time you are asleep. All the hours when you do not think of it at all it still goes on — when you are playing and running and jumping, when you are thinking of the game, still this beating must go on regularly. If it stopped for a moment you would die. Who does look after it? Who is it that is tapping, tapping there so faithfully and regularly? It is God. That is God's hand you feel. I mean that literally, that is God's hand which moves continually in your heart. So you can feel God. That is God's care.

But can you hear God? I saw a poor immigrant woman in an electric car the other day. She had two small children and a baby to look after, and she had one of those brick-red telescopic cases packed full of things and

with a broad strap round it. She looked very poor and miserable and not at all attractive. There was a very trim and neat conductor standing at the end of the car telling people to step lively and trying to have them move out quickly. This poor woman wanted to get out, but it was so hard to get both the children and the baby and the big case into two weak hands. She was trying to do it when the conductor saw her. What did he do? He came forward and said to her courteously, as if he were asking a favor of a queen, "Let me help you, Ma'am." Then he took the big case and not only carried it out of the car but right on to the sidewalk, and was back again in time to lift the older child down from the step. Now who told him to do that? Somebody must have told him to do it, because there are lots of people

who would never have done it. I think he heard the voice of God in his heart. I think everyone can hear God's voice in his heart telling him to do nice things like that. "Don't be ashamed!" it says. "Do it!" "Don't do it!" it says another time. "Remember what your mother said!" So I think we can all hear God. It is His voice that is called conscience.

But what about seeing God! Can anyone ever see God? Ah, that is the hardest thing to do. It is easy to feel God's care, it is necessary to hear God's voice, but only a few people have seen God. They say it is the greatest and most wonderful experience in the world to see God. How can one see God? Well, there is in North Conway, in New Hampshire, a great cliff, that is seen clearly from the village, called White Horse Ledge.

You have not been very long in North Conway before someone asks you if you have seen the white horse on the Ledge. Somewhere amid the mottled white and brown and gray of that Ledge there is a likeness of a white horse. Now the curious thing is that some people see it after a few minutes; some people take days to see it, and then suddenly as they are looking somewhere else, out of the corner of their eye, they will suddenly see the white horse start out of the Ledge. Some people never can see it — they have not been looking the right way or in the right place or at the right angle; so they never see it. Now it is just the same way with God. Some people see God in this world after a few years, some people take a long, long time to be able to see God, some people never are able to see God. Jesus said that the thing that made you

able to see God was having a pure heart. As long as you are selfish or mean you cannot see God. But generous, kind people, some of them, come at last to be able to see God in the eyes of their friends, in the sunset glow, in the face of the sad and needy soul and in many other places. I think that if we go on feeling God's care, and obeying His voice, some day we too may have this greatest and best of experiences and see God.

VERILY I SAY UNTO YOU, THEY HAVE THEIR REWARD

Matt. 6 : 5

THE TEXT MEANS, THEY HAVE got the prize. But Jesus thinks there are some prizes not worth getting. In a town in Scotland recently there were two children who had attended School for five years without missing a single day, or even being tardy once. The School Board heard about it and they said that they would give a silver watch and chain to the boy or girl who had a perfect record for six years. So John and Jean both made up their minds to get the prize. One day towards the end of the sixth year John was running to school

when he heard some one tap on the window of the house he was passing. The window opened and the widow, Mrs. MacMurray, who lived in the house called out: "My little girl has been taken terribly sick and she is just lying at death's door now, and I have no one to send for the doctor; run quickly for me and get him!" But John looked at the town clock and saw it would make him late for school, so he pretended he did not hear and ran on. In a few minutes Jean came running along, and Mrs. MacMurray called out the same thing to her. Jean called back, "O I'm sorry! All right, Mrs. MacMurray, I'll get him." Then she turned back and ran the half mile to the doctor's house and brought him back with her. But this made her nearly three-quarters of an hour late for school.

At the last day when the prizes were given out at school, all the town was there to see who got the best places. At the end the president of the School Board said he was now going to give the special prize of a silver watch and chain which had been offered to all children who had not been either absent or tardy for six years. He said that there were two who might have got the prize but one of them had been late once, so she could not get it. Then John's name was called out to get the watch and chain.

As they were all going out the girl who sat next to Jean said to her, "Never you mind, you saved Marjorie MacMurray's life." John wears the silver chain all across his vest, but no one looks at it except himself. Verily I say unto you, he has his reward.

THE MAGIC RING

ONCE GOD WANTED TO GIVE his children a present. He leaned down from heaven and said, "I am going to give each one of you a magic ring which I myself have made for you. Put this ring on your forefinger," He said, "and you can do anything you want to do."

As his children held up their hands, God slipped on the forefinger of each the magic ring. The ring was of pure gold. There was a great diamond upon it so large and brilliant that it filled all the place where it was with light. The ring all around was divided into sections, each filled with different kinds of precious stones: amethysts as blue as a baby's eyes, emeralds as green as the depths of the

sea; as you got round towards the back of the ring the stones got darker, there were rubies glowing red like the robin's breast, and at the very back set among sparkling black diamonds with their myriad twinkling was a wondrous moonstone showing a different shape in every light. As you looked closer into the ring you found that all the spaces between the stones were set with thousands of little seed-pearls arranged in order due as though ticking off the section when you turned the ring around.

And with this ring you could do anything you desired. One young man let his hand droop down and the ring fell off into the mud and dust and was lost. One little girl with the ring upon her finger touched her room which was all untidy, and lo! the dolls raised themselves off the floor and set themselves in

their chairs, the playthings gathered themselves together into their places, the bits of paper were picked up, the dust disappeared, and the room was tidy again. One boy with the ring on his hand touched the garden and lo! the weeds were pulled up, the beds raked and watered and the garden smiling with content. One man put on the ring and as his pen touched paper lo! a story was written that made all men smile. One touched those around in the home and made everyone sad, another touched those in the village and made everyone, even the angels in heaven, to rejoice.

Now I wonder if any of you know what this magic ring is which God makes and gives to His children and with which you can do anything you like. The text will tell you. The text is in Psalms 118 : 24, "This is the day

which the Lord hath made!" The magic ring is a new day. God bends down and puts it on your finger every morning lit by the diamond rays of the sun, the blue sky, the green earth, the golden glow of sunset, the myriad stars, the lady moon. Won't you see what you can do with it today?

I CAUSED THE WIDOW'S HEART TO SING FOR JOY

Job 29 : 13

THERE ONCE WERE TWO candles which were made beside one another in the same factory. One was sent to a big city in America, the other drifted away till it came to a distant part of China.

The first candle was sent to the house of a rich lady who was going to have a party. She had the whole house lit from top to bottom with electric lights, but she thought a candle would look cute upon the piano when the great singer was singing. So she lit it and put it on the piano in the great ball-room

filled with thousands of electric lights. When the great singer was singing a waiter near by opened a door and the draft blew the candle out. What happened do you think? NOTHING HAPPENED. Nobody noticed that the poor little candle had blown out because the room was so dazzling with electric lights.

The other candle came at last into the possession of a poor Chinaman who lived at crossroads in a little house all by itself. It was the only candle he had and one of his dearest possessions, so he wrapped it up carefully and put it safely away. One night he was awakened by someone knocking at his door. He got up and put his head out of the window.

A voice said: "I am a doctor, I am trying to find the way to the house of a little boy who is dying of diphtheria, but the candle in

my lantern has burned out and it is so dark I cannot see the road. Unless I can get another candle, the little boy must die."

Then the Chinaman said: "I have a candle I will give you, it is the only one within miles, but I have it." So he went up and got the candle and it burned in the missionary's lantern and showed him his way, and the life of the little boy was saved. And his mother, who was a widow, was glad.

Now which candle would you rather have been?

There were two dolls made by the same man, each with the same blue eyes, the same curly fair hair, the same pink bows on its shoes. And one went on the Christmas Tree of a little girl who had more than twenty other presents. When it was taken off the tree she looked at it a moment and then,

because she had so many nicer dollies, she forgot about it, and it got mixed up with the boxes and the excelsior and was brushed up in a bundle and put out with the ash-barrel, and in the morning the ashman came and emptied it with a lot of other rubbish on the dump.

In the same city there was another little girl whose father was dead and whose mother was an invalid. She hung up her stocking on Christmas Eve and prayed that there might be something in it when she awoke. But her father was dead, her mother was sick in bed in the next room, and there was no one to tell Santa Claus about her. The little girl went to sleep at nine o'clock, and the clock struck ten and then eleven, and still the stocking hung empty at the foot of the bed; the clock struck twelve, and still there was nothing in

it; the moon looked in at the window as the clock struck one, then came two and three and four, and still the stocking was empty; the clock struck five and six and the window began to grow light, and still there was nothing in that poor stocking. Suddenly there was a step upon the stair. It was the doctor who had come to see the sick mother before he went away for Christmas Day. He stepped lightly into the mother's room and then peeped into the little girl's room. She was still sleeping and at the foot of her bed hung the forlorn little empty stocking. He tiptoed over to the bed, took a bundle out of the pocket of his fur coat and slipped it into the stocking.

In half an hour the little girl awoke and before she opened her eyes she remembered it was Christmas; she was afraid to open her

eyes for fear there should not be anything in the stocking. She made up her mind that there would be nothing in it and then she peeked. Yes, there was the stocking — but THERE WAS, there was something in it, wonder of wonders! and she was over at it in a minute and was bringing in to her delighted mother her only doll, the prettiest doll in all the world.

Which doll would you rather have been?

MY WORD

Isaiah 55 : 11

I SOMETIMES IMAGINE THAT there is a little invisible fairy who hovers around us human beings. This little fairy holds a pair of scales in her hand. The beam is a sunbeam. She holds it by a diamond ring through which the sunbeam runs. The chains are the gossamer of spiders' webs, and the scale-pans are hazel-nut shells. These scales she uses for weighing our words to see how much they are worth.

A mother once had two boys. She said to one boy, "Will you promise me not to go on the ice without asking me first?" The first boy said, "Yes, mother." And the angel caught the words as he said them and weighed them, and they weighed *nothing*. For the

boy went off, and when he got among a crowd who were going on the ice he did not care about the word he had given his mother, but he went on too.

The mother said to the second boy, "Will you promise me not to go on the ice without asking me first?" And the second boy said, "Yes, mother." And the angel caught the words as he said them, and they weighed more than all the weights she could put into the other scale. So she did as only angels can do and put the whole earth into the other scale, and the second boy's word weighed more than the whole world. Because whatever happened he would keep the word he had given to his mother.

Years afterwards the mother was old and gray and was going to leave her sons, who were now both grown men. She called them to

her bedside to say good-bye to them. She said, "There is only one thing I want you to promise to do for me after I am gone."

The first son in tears said, "I'll promise to do it, mother." But she looked at him and murmured half to herself, "I am so sorry, but I cannot trust you."

Then she turned to the second son and said, "Will you promise to do it for me?" And he answered, "Yes, mother!" She said, "Now I am satisfied," and was gone from them.

You see, the first boy had gone on in life just as he had started, and his word was worth nothing. Would you not have hated to be that first man, whom his own mother could not trust?

Well, your word, my boy and girl, is worth just as much as you make it worth. If you are constantly trampling on it yourself, then

no one else thinks it is worth anything. But if you believe that it is "Better to die, than ever to lie"; if you scorn to take the easy lie-door out of any hard awkward situation; if you always tell the truth and take the consequences like a true man or woman, then as you grow up, people will think more of one word of yours than of a thousand words of one who tells lies.

FORTY DAYS

Mark 1 : 13

FORTY DAYS IS A LONG TIME, and you can do a great deal in it. There is a time called Lent which is just forty days long. It is kept partly in memory of forty days which our Savior spent alone among the wild beasts in the wilderness, praying and conquering temptation. We all try to keep it in this way, we make a special effort to kill out something bad that is in us and bring in some new good thing into our lives.

Boys, when they are going to try to beat in a football game, go for a time to what they call a training table to get their bodies into the best condition, they eat only certain

things, and they take especial care of themselves in every way.

Now Lent is a training table for the soul. I want to tell you three ways you can keep it.

(1) Give up something you like every day. One family I know do not have any candy in the house at all during Lent. But what is the good of giving up things you like, they are surely few enough of them in life without deliberately giving them up, are there not? It is to strengthen your will. One girl I know not only gives up eating candy during Lent, but she does this: — She buys a box of candy the first day of Lent, and she puts it on her table right where she can see it, and she leaves it there all the forty days without touching it. You see, it is to strengthen her will. She likes candy very much, there is the box, there is nothing to prevent her open-

ing it and taking some except her promise. That makes her will strong, perhaps forty times as strong at the end of Lent as it was at the beginning.

(2) Do something that others will like every day. There was once in a city a little girl who was an invalid and had to lie on a couch at a window high up in a big city building all day. She had only one thing to look forward to, and that was that a gentleman every day in summer brought her a big bunch of flowers. This was how she enjoyed herself. She could just look out of her window away down to the pavement below. Whenever she saw some poor lonely soul coming along she would drop a flower. The poor man or woman or child would suddenly find on the pavement in front of them a beautiful, fresh, sweet flower. They would pick it up and

smell it and look all around and see nobody, and go on so much happier and with new gladness in their souls, knowing nothing of the two little eyes away up the block looking down upon them with infinite glee. Try in your way to do forty such things in Lent, to drop a little flower of kindness in the way of somebody every day.

(3) Take a minute just to remember God every day. It may be in your own room, it may be on your way to school — it does not matter where — just stop thinking about other things for a moment, and say, "O God, I know you are beside me, I want to make the best of today," then stop a moment quietly to feel that God is with you, and ask Him to help you in the things you want to do that day.

Life is like a climb up a big mountain,

FORTY DAYS

We start as little babies lying on our backs in the valley, crying for the moon and smiling at the shadows. We end, if we succeed, on the mountain top, masters of the world, friends of God. Now on the way up you come to a cliff which is very steep called Lent. In it there are cut forty steps. Won't you try to go up one every day? Won't you try to strengthen your will forty times, to do forty good deeds, to remember God in forty prayers? Then at the end of Lent perhaps you will be forty times as strong, and forty times as loving and forty times as good as you are today.

THE WORD HE COULD NOT SAY

A Thanksgiving Story

THERE WAS ONCE A MAN WHO was a pretty good man. A great many people were kind to him, but he was always in a great hurry and simply took what they did for him without saying much about it. His parents gave him a good home which he took as a matter of course. His teachers tried their best to help him to learn the things that would make him get on, but he never said a word to them about all their trouble. So he went on in life and when he died he went up to the gate of heaven.

There an angel gave him a golden key and added these words,

"Take the key!
Say the word!
And enter in!"

He took the key out of the angel's hand in his usual way and stuck it into the keyhole. But he could not open the door. He tried and tried and tried and tried, but it was no use, the door would not open, till at last the angel had to ask him to give the key back and stand aside to let the others who were waiting pass in. The angel made him go away back to wait. Everyone of the others took the key from the angel, said something to her and then opened the door and passed in. But every time he tried it he failed.

At last after waiting and trying many times, he got down on his knees to the angel and besought her to tell him what the magic word was which gave all the rest entrance into

heaven. The angel smiled as she said, "What will you say if I tell you?" He was in such fear of being shut out of heaven altogether, that he forgot himself and said, "Why I should thank you." "That is the word!" said the angel, smiling, "You have forgotten to say it all through life!" "I see it now," he said, "it will take all eternity to say it to all who have been good to me!" Then the angel handed him the key. As he took it he said, "Thank you," and when he put it in the lock the door opened and he heard all heaven ringing with the songs of Thanksgiving.

" O children, children dear! my heart
For better lore would seldom yearn,
Could I but teach the hundredth part
Of what from you I learn."

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Oct. 2005

PreservationTechnologies
A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION
111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 017 042 398 7